

# **Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: June 4-10**

***Reminder for the week: Address distracted boating and improper lookouts***

**DOVER** – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between June 4-10 made 2,831 contacts with anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 54 citations. Officers responded to 61 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. An increased Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

## **Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police in the Community**

- On June 5, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers discussed the role of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers and answered hunting, fishing, and boating questions during a school event at Banneker Elementary near Milford. The Marine Patrol Vessel *Oscar*, which was very popular, was on display.
- On June 6, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers ran in the Special Olympics Torch Run from Rehoboth Beach Bandstand to Troop 7 near Lewes.
- On June 9, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers attended a kids' fishing event at Cabela's in Newark.

## **Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Action**

Incident of note:

- On June 5, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers cited an individual for failure to maintain a proper lookout following an investigation into a boat accident where a 58' Hatteras with six people on board was sinking after striking the Reedy Island Jetty in the Delaware River. No injuries occurred as a result of the accident.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

**Fisheries Conservation:** Unlicensed fishing (3), possession of undersized striped bass (2)\*, possession of undersized blue crab (4), improperly marked recreational crab pot (1), use of recreational crab pot without required turtle excluder (1), possession of undersized white perch (1), and possession of undersized summer flounder (2).

**Boating and Boating Safety:** No life jacket on a child age 12 or younger as required by law (4), operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (5), operating a personal watercraft without a life jacket (1), no sound-producing device on board (2), and failure to maintain a proper lookout (1).

**Public Safety:** Possession of drug paraphernalia (7) and operating a motor vehicle at unreasonable speed (1).

**Other:** Trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (17), unattended vehicle in a wildlife area for 24 hours (1), and parking violation (1).

\*Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters and boaters who comply with and

support Delaware's fishing, hunting and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, wildlife and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030 or online at [de.gov/ogt](https://de.gov/ogt).

### **Are you AWARE?**

Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind boaters to always be safe on the waters by addressing distracted boating and improper lookouts.

Inattentive operation of a vessel in Delaware includes both distracted boating and improper lookouts. We urge boaters to put down their electronics, talk to your passengers about a distraction-free ride, and watch for other boaters and swimmers around you. Any vessel operator who fails to give their full time and attention to the operation of the vessel or fails to maintain a proper lookout while operating the vessel will be found guilty of inattentive operation.

Some other ways to avoid distracted boating and improper lookouts include:

- Eat before you go! Focus becomes divided when you have one hand on the helm and one on your meal.
- Have a passenger handle adjusting the music so you as the operator are not worrying about changing the stations to find the best song!
- Assign a passenger to be an additional lookout as waterways can become congested. Having another pair of eyes for other vessels and people in the water is always beneficial.
- Make sure there is always another person on board who can operate the vessel safely and legally in case you become fatigued from all the sun and fun.
- Never drink and boat.

To report boating and fisheries violations please call the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police 24hour dispatch line at: 302-739-4580 or 1-800-523-3336.

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<https://www.facebook.com/DEFWNRPolice/>.

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**Media contact:** Sgt. Brooke Africa, 302-382-7167, or Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913.